

NEOLOGISMS REVISITED

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For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words await another voice.

from Little Gidding, by T. S. Eliot

In the February 1974 issue of Word Ways, I presented a review of A Dictionary of New English, edited by Barnhart, Steinmetz and Barnhart. That dictionary was a collection of words, initials, phrases, abbreviations, acronyms and meanings which had entered the vocabulary of the English language during the period 1963- 1972.

The editors had originally intended to issue a second dictionary of new English a decade after the previous one, in 1983. But so much new material has been accumulated that the second volume was published three years ahead of its scheduled time: The Second Barnhart Dictionary of New English, edited by Barnhart, Steinmetz and Barnhart, was published in 1980 by Barnhart/Harper and Row, Bronxville NY at \$19.95.

The two dictionaries contain more than ten thousand words and meanings not entered or inadequately explained in standard dictionaries. My review of the first volume looked at some of the words in that dictionary. In this review, I'd like to look at some of the words in the second volume unleashed to a waiting world. What do these words look like?

Prefixes that are particularly productive of new words are agri-, dis- and petro-, as illustrated by

agribusinessman	disinform	petrocrat
agriindustry	disintermediate	petrodollar
agripower	diseconomics	petropower

Suffixes, too, have spawned many new words. Particularly notable ones are -ization, -person and -ologist, which appear in specimens such as

bumiputraization	Manhattanization	statesperson
comprehensivization	Zarianization	dendroclimatologist
delawyerization	councilperson	Joviologist
Malaysianization	policeperson	Washingtonologist

The suffix -quake provides items such as

corequake
crustquake

Marsquake
silent earthquake

silent quake

These should all be added to the list of quakes which appeared in my article "Quakes" in the May 1979 issue of Word Ways (and the August 1979 Colloquy).

Many of the new words convey ideas which otherwise would require several words of explanation -- sesquipedalianisms. Examples include

biogeocoenology	nucleocosmochronology	transhistorical
embourgeoisification	psychobiographical	

It is interesting to note that embourgeoisification is defined as "the adoption of bourgeois or middle-class practices and values". The first dictionary contained a similar word, bourgeoisification, which was defined as "the act or process of becoming bourgeois; assuming the characteristics considered typical of the middle class". Is there a subtle but distinct difference between the two words? If so, can someone please enlighten me? I look forward to a third volume in this series of dictionaries to see what even longer word these two words have led to!

There are many words which, though new, are made up from entirely familiar building blocks, like many of the words discussed so far. Additional examples include

biowarfare	hesiflation	tobaccophobe
biuniqueness	omnisexuality	whydunit
earthlubber	psychobabble	winewatcher
ecofallow	quackupuncture	xenocurrency
garbageology	suggestopaedia	

The Watergate scandal of the 1970s has inspired a host of entries in the second volume of this dictionary. For example, there is

creep	oilgate	Watergateana
dirty tricks	plumber	Watergatese
enemies list	point in time	Watergatism
Hollywoodgate	Quakergate	Watergater
Koreagate	smoking gun	

So far, I have not felt it necessary to define any of the words that have been selected from the dictionary. Most are made up from familiar parts, from which meanings can probably be gleaned, or are familiar because they have come very much to the forefront in the past decade or so. However, there are many words in the dictionary which have no obvious relationship to already-existing words. Some examples are

banjax	to hit, beat, or overcome
chozrim	Israelis who return to Israel
dazibao	a Chinese political newspaper

ekpwele	the monetary unit of Equatorial Guinea
glitz	dazzle
gorp	a mixture of dried fruit, nuts and seeds
iaido	a Japanese form of fencing
koza	a staff unit in Japanese universities
ngultrum	the monetary unit of Bhutan
nudzh	a nuisance
schizzy	schizophrenic
splib	a black person
synroc	a synthetic rock
tsutsumu	the Japanese art of wrapping articles in bamboo, paper, etc.
ujamaa	a form of socialism in Tanzania
yakuza	a Japanese hoodlum
zedonk	the offspring of a male zebra and a female donkey
zek	an inmate of a Soviet prison
zit	a pimple
zizzy	showy in dress or manner

Not only does the dictionary list words, but it also lists phrases and terms -- some familiar, others strange. Here are just a few

animal lib	known quantity
big enchilada	last hurrah
clockwork orange	male chauvinist piggery
double nickel	neutron bomb
empty nest syndrome	oil spill
floppy disk	phone phreakdom
gal operon	quick and dirty
home computer	reverse discrimination
incomes policy	Saturday night special
junk food	tadpole galaxy

Many of the terms in the dictionary include digits and other non-alphabetic characters. Examples are

après-40	him/her	M-3
catch-23	180-degree	M ₂
Element 107	lower 48	Red No. 40
Element 126	Mr. Clean	3HO

Something which the second dictionary does that the first one didn't is introduce a series of 22 articles (such as acronyms, blends, coinages, derivatives, euphemisms, nonce words, and so on) interspersed with the words and terms entered in the dictionary. Thus, for example, blends are discussed between bleeper and bleomycin. These mini-articles discuss the processes of word formation with numerous examples drawn from the entries in the dictionary. At the entry on blends is a half-page article which incorporates words such as

blaxploitation black exploitation

exercycle	exercise bicycle
extencisor	extensor and exercise
faction	fact and fiction
scrapnel	scrap and shrapnel
yakow	yak and cow

At the entry on nonce words is a three-quarter-page article quoting words such as

herstory	a pun on 'history'
petishism	a pun on 'fetishism'
smotherlove	a pun on 'mother love'
yumptious	from 'yummy' and 'scrumptious'

What about logologically interesting items? Though I haven't examined and considered every term in depth, I have uncovered a few worthwhile terms. There seems to be only one tautonym, free-free (a term from astrophysics), but there are several second-order reduplications (near-tautonyms) such as

fag hag	fender-bender	power tower
fave rave	kidvid	pooper-scooper

The dictionary has three two-letter words: af (a derogatory name for a black African in Zimbabwe and South Africa), gi (the costume worn for judo or karate), and ho (a prostitute). Taramasalata, a word which I have been familiar with for many years, has now appeared in a dictionary. This is notable for its six alternate As and no other vowels. There is at least one palindrome, beeb, and at least one reversal, delir. Charmonium, jargonaut and palimony are examples of words that can be beheaded (first letter removed) to form other words: harmonium, Argonaut and alimony. Going in the other direction, astration is the beheaded form of castration. Qwerty is interesting for not having a U after the Q. Ouguiya is interesting for having only one true consonant in its seven letters. Taser is an additional transposal in the prolific AERST group (including aster, rates, reast, stare, stear, tares and tears). Lilangeni has the plural form emalangeni. Ara-A has three letters the same, the first two As being in lower-case and the final one in upper-case. The -in' form of the gerundive ending -ing appears in the terms shuckin' and jivin', signifyin', and woofin'. Palindrome and palindromic are both listed, though with meanings completely unrelated to wordplay: the definition at palindrome reads "a segment of double-stranded DNA having identical sequences of nucleotides on both strands", with palindromic the associated adjective. Half-a-dozen fairly easy-to-spot transposals are antibuser/urbanites, auto-trains/saturation, eldercare/recleared, integrase/reseating, Naderite/retained, and sonicate/canoeist.

There are many words which have some connection with language, linguistics or speech, such as

Ameroenglish	expletive deleted	Jonah word
businesspeak	familygram	lexigram
exonym	language planning	Yinglish

Though I am generally very enthusiastic about the second dictionary, I do have a few minor niggles. Ball park is defined as "the general or approximate area of an estimate (usually in the phrase 'in the ball park') " but the Random House Dictionary back in 1966 defined this term as "a range or approximation". (Ball-park figure, the associated phrase, is correctly in the second dictionary, for the Random House Dictionary did not include that.) Another quibble: the adjective gold is defined as "of or designating a phonograph record that has sold a million copies or an album with sales of a million dollars". Fine, I don't disagree with that. But I do disagree with the date of 1969 put on the adjective's earliest widespread use. The term was certainly widely used in the 1950s, and was probably known even in the 1940s. Joseph Murrells, in his book The Book of Golden Discs (London, 1974) says that the first gold disc ever awarded to an artist was believed to have been presented to the Glenn Miller orchestra in February 1942. Another quibble from the world of popular music: Motown is defined as "a style of rhythm and blues with a strong beat, which originated in Detroit, Michigan". The etymology indicates 1970 as the earliest date when this was in widespread use. However, the term goes back a decade earlier. It was originally the name of a record label in Detroit which was formed in June 1960. Subsequently it was used for a type of music beyond that recorded on the Motown label, but this extended use was already developed by 1963-64.

The reader may wonder where the editors have collected all these neologisms from. My impression from much ferreting around in the dictionary is that considerable use has been made of journals and newspapers such as The New York Times, The New York Times Magazine, The New Yorker, The Times (London), The Observer (London), The Sunday Times (London), Scientific American, New Scientist, Saturday Review, The Listener, Time magazine, Newsweek magazine, The Washington Post, The Times Literary Supplement, and Harper's. I haven't carried out a representative sampling of the citations quoted -- perhaps someone else would care to tackle that.

For the reader who would like an alternative review of the second dictionary, I refer him/her to Verbatim (Volume VII, Number 3, Winter 1980-81, pages 14-15), where the editor Laurence Urdang reviewed it.

Two of the words in the dictionary which particularly appealed to me were Francisize and wordaholic. The former (to cause or adopt or change to the French language) is really only relevant to myself and others bearing my surname; the latter, though, can be taken as referring to all readers of Word Ways. A wordaholic is one addicted to, obsessed with, or having a compulsive need of or for words!

And to finish off, here are 26 words, from A to Z, which give a flavour of the dictionary:

après-surgery	juvenocracy	street-smart
Bosnywash	Kung Fu	tipee
Canutism	light-second	unlib
drugola	mini-black-hole	vanpool
ept	Newyorican	womanagement
fladge	oilberg	X-C skiing
gas-guzzling	personhole	youthcult
heavy rock	quasimolecular	Zimbabwean
industrio-nuclear	rockfest	

The dictionary is an excellent complement to the earlier Dictionary of New English. It is very reassuring to know that, though many of the words treated will never make it into an unabridged dictionary, they are being properly recorded and made available to wordaholics. A great book -- get it if you can!

ROOM'S DICTIONARY OF DISTINGUISHABLES

Published by Routledge & Kegan Paul in 1981 for \$12.95, this 132-page book by Adrian Room lists groups of nouns that share some common property, and traces out the differences among them in an accompanying text. In the introduction, Room argues that his book fills a gap between a dictionary, which often distinguishes mystifyingly (a gale is a 'strong wind', a tempest a 'violent wind'), and an encyclopedia which tells the reader more than he wants to know. Actually, this gap has to some extent already been filled by the synonym dictionary. Room's book is less comprehensive than (say) Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms when the same ground is covered, but it also looks at many tenuously-related groups of words which Webster does not regard as synonymous. To illustrate:

Room: anger-fury-rage-indignation; Webster: anger-ire-rage-fury-indignation-wrath

Room: antiseptic-disinfectant; Webster: antiseptic-germicide-bactericide-disinfectant

Room: boat-ship; Webster: boat-vessel-ship-craft

However, Room also includes such non-Websterian groups as ale-bitters-mild-stout-lager, astronomy-astrology, frog-toad, Frankenstein-Dracula, minister-priest-pastor, maze-labyrinth, and gnat-midge-mosquito. The distinction between the choice of entries is most sharply illustrated by the word game; Webster associates this with sport-play-fun-jest, whereas Room selects terms from a particular game (tennis) with game-set-match-rubber. Dictionary-browsers will enjoy random walks through this book.